

Mastermind



Background Information: What is Masterminding?

Napoleon Hill coined the concept of the Mastermind Alliance in his classic book Think and Grow Rich. He believed that a group of like-minded, achievement-oriented individuals could dramatically support each other's success.

He says he learned about the Mastermind Principle from Andrew Carnegie, the richest self-made man at the time. Carnegie said that both his wealth and success were due entirely to the Master Mind Process. In essence, he is talking about the collective consciousness or the concept that “the sum of the whole is greater than its parts” or “two heads are better than one.” So how about 4, 5 or 6 heads?

Thomas Edison, Alexander Graham Bell, Henry Ford and Harvey Firestone were all members of a Mastermind Group. This group of leaders knew they couldn't create in a vacuum and they relied on each other for feedback, ideas and accountability. They called themselves the Wayfarers. They also controlled much of the industry in our country for many years.

Benefits gleamed from a Mastermind group:

1. You are listened to in a safe and nonjudgmental environment.
2. You have the support and encouragement of your fellow educators.
3. You increase your chances of “crafting your container” for back home because a group of people will assist you in brainstorming solutions and action steps.
4. You can bounce ideas off of the group before you implement action, saving yourself time and energy.
5. You receive helpful feedback from proactive, objective, passionate people who are invested in YOUR success.
6. You develop deeper relationships with others.

Purpose:

Mastermind groups are used as a way to:

1. provide a forum for brilliant thinking around a topic each of us brings to our group.
Possible topics for today include:
 - a. Leadership issues.
 - b. Professional Learning topics — high expectations, collaborative culture, data/results.
 - c. Data – what/how to use data with team/building
 - d. Curriculum issues – Common Core, 21st century skills, etc
 - e. Interaction with team members, especially NEW members (relationships!)
 - f. ANY topic!
2. model a process that we may want to use “back at the ranch.”
3. strengthen our learning community.

Mastermind Operational Guidelines

1. The goal of the Mastermind group is to **provide solution-seeking** (possibility thinking!) opportunities, increase creativity among leaders and to provide a safe, constructive environment in which we can explore/expand our thinking on any topic for which you want input.
2. Each group will be comprised of 4 educators. Each educator will have a total of 10 minutes—2 minutes to present their item, 6 minutes to receive feedback and 2 minutes to share their take-aways.

Individual leaders responsibility:

1. Each educator will be prepared to ask for the kind of input they want from the group—encouragement, support, critique, brainstorming possibilities/strategies....
2. After each educator has received feedback, he/she will state what they have received from the group. He/she may request additional information from specific group members to be shared at a different time.
3. Optional—the presenting educator may take notes or ask someone in the group to record the group’s brainstorming ideas.

Group’s responsibility:

1. Stay focused on one person’s issue at a time.
2. Listen to the speaker’s issue/goal before offering feedback.
3. Make sure the team is clear about the issue/goal before feedback is offered.
4. Keep the feedback constructive.
5. Move quickly from one educator to another so that lots of ideas/possibilities can be generated without stepping on someone’s thinking.
6. Keep conversations confidential.
7. Enforce the group norms.

What Mastermind groups are : A place---	What Mastermind groups are not : A place--
--to share ideas, experiences as a way of providing feedback	--to offer advice i.e. “You need to---.” “Why don’t you....” “You should...” etc.
--to offer possibilities	--to solve the issue presented or to “teach/ preach” your solution

Facilitator’s responsibility: (this role can be rotated among group members)

1. Keep the group focused on the educator’s request.
2. Serve as timekeeper so that each group member has time to present and receive feedback.
3. Monitors the sharing of the conversation space, everyone’s voice in the room.

Mastermind Group Process

Individual-----Group

Round One—Educator shares issue, problem, goal, question, idea, challenge, celebration (1 minute).

Round Two—Group members ask clarifying questions. By helping the educator get clear about his/her situation, we can be assured that the possibilities generated by the group are in alignment with the topic expressed (1 minute)

Round Three—Educator asks for the kind of input s/he wants from the group: encouragement, support, critique, strategies/possibilities, etc. (1 minute)

Round Four—This is the opportunity for the other members of the group to share as many comments, solutions, possibilities, etc that the group can generate. **This is not a time for dialogue.**

- Group members share their best thinking and the ideas flow from one member to another.

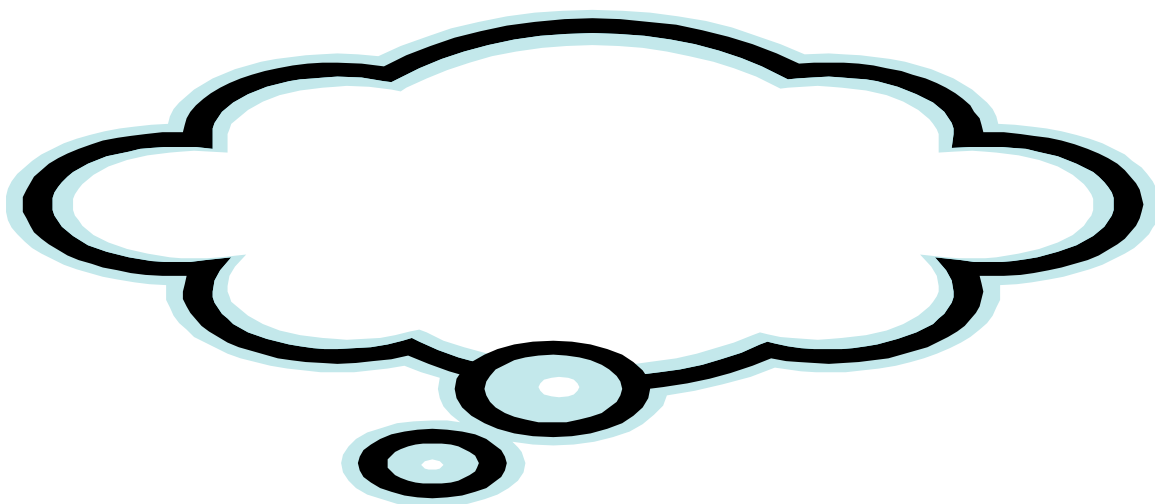
- Leader** just listens and takes notes if he/she wishes.

(6 minutes)

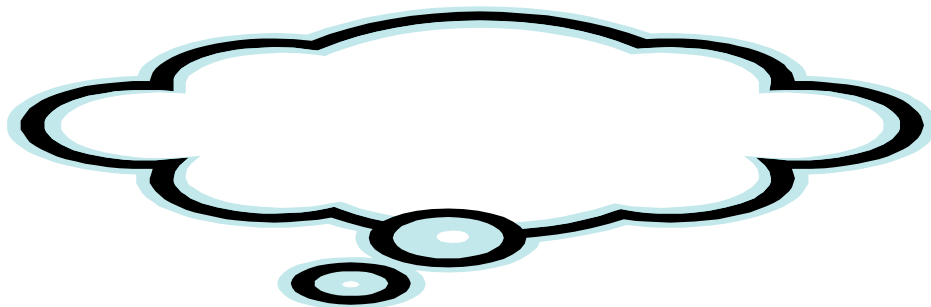
Round Five—Educator shares “take-away” and/or requests more time/information from specific group members. This conversation will take place at a later time. (1 minute)

Rotate to the next group member and repeat the process.

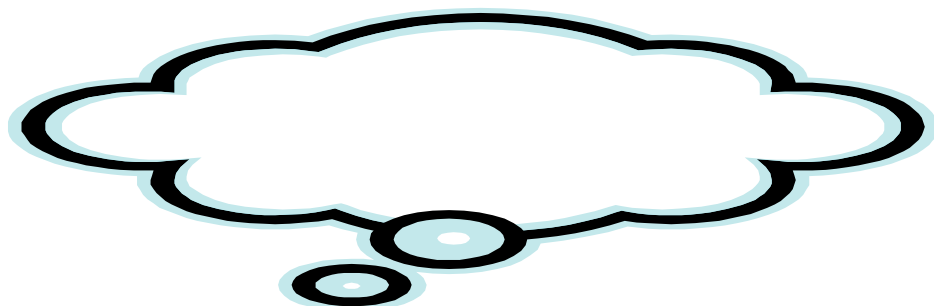
Mastermind Preparation Form



Step 1: Write your topic in the thinking bubble above. Be concise. In 1-2 sentences, get to the heart of your issue/topic. Is it a concern, challenge, opportunity, issue, goal, question, idea or recurring topic around your classroom? Is it about a upcoming PD session with your team/building? Remember, “The problem named is the problem solved.”



Step 2: What is it you want from the group? i.e. alternative solutions, possibility thinking, confidence regarding the right decision, identification of consequences, where to find more information, critique of current plan, list of possible strategies, etc.



Step 3: What insights/ideas/strategies are you taking away from the group’s input? With whom, if anyone, do you want to have another conversation?